



Piloting a Benefits Bundle Approach for Families Navigating Supports

Collaborating agencies:

HHS (HRSA, CMS, ACF), USDA (WIC, SNAP), HUD, ED, DOL

Foundation:

Discovery Research & Life Experience Charter

Project Summary

The Benefits Bundle aims to connect families welcoming a new baby to a bundle of supportive services through personal case management that is convenient, customized for language, and appropriately tailored to specific communities.

Customer pain point:

Families need help obtaining the correct information at the right time regarding eligibility, applications, and enrollment for existing services that can support them. Many families need help applying to programs due to burdensome processes, limited support on how to access information, disconnected systems, lack of coordinated and timely follow-through, or distrust in the government.

Project Objectives

The Benefits Bundle will strengthen relationships across support systems to deepen health equity efforts in communities and ensure families are aware of and able to use services available at the Federal, State, local, Tribal, or territorial levels.

Target milestones in 2023 include:

- *Readiness:* Co-design and pilot the Benefits Bundle intervention in communities through approximately five pilots with HHS Healthy Start grantees to learn how to implement the intervention in a scalable manner.
- *Momentum:* Demonstrate the Benefits Bundle proof of concept and build the foundation for impact evaluations to be conducted.
- *Capacity-Building:* Disseminate best practices and lessons learned among Healthy Start grantees or others interested in creating a Benefits Bundle in their communities.

- *Support:* Build a model for future Federal approaches to Benefits Bundle supports.

Primary deliverables in 2023 include:

- Benefits Bundle Playbook that outlines successful case studies for implementation of the pilot and describes how a community can launch its own Benefits Bundle
- Technical assistance and training for Healthy Start grantees

Measures of Success

Key outcomes:

By connecting families via personal case management with a Benefits Bundle of core public benefits programs and reducing barriers to accessing those programs and benefits:

- Families will have greater awareness of and easier access to public benefits (increase multi-program enrollment of those that are eligible)
- Enrollment gaps in core birth to early childhood programs will shrink
- Maternal and caregiver stress will measurably reduce

Design phase project measures:

- Deploy the Benefits Bundles in a small number of Healthy Start sites in States, Tribes, and/or territories
- Increase enrollment of eligible families in birth to early childhood programs
- Improve experience measures such as trust and satisfaction compared to the baseline

Piloting a Newborn Supply Kit at the Time of Birth

Collaborating agencies:

HHS (IEA), USDA (FNS), DOL, ED, HUD

Foundation:

Discovery Research & Life Experience Charter

Project Summary

The Newborn Supply Kit is envisioned to be a one-time, universal service delivered in collaboration with community organizations that provides families with basic physical supplies crucial to the first few weeks after delivery. Newborn Supply Kits will also include resources about Federal programs and benefits, key developmental milestones, and other helpful information to build trust and form a foundation of relationships for further service connections.

Customer pain point:

Some families lack essential physical goods like diapers and feeding supports after giving birth. Costs for some essential supplies fall outside most benefits program coverage, and reimbursement for items covered by Medicaid takes time and can be complicated. For all families, core essentials and information can be helpful at an important (and often overwhelming!) moment.

Project Objectives

The project will allow some new families in pilot jurisdictions to receive a Newborn Supply Kit. The Kit, modeled on successful programs in other countries, seeks to reduce the time, stress, and burden on new parents to obtain immediately-needed supplies and increase knowledge about government services and community resources for new families. Equitable distribution of the Kits can help reduce the stigma associated with seeking government services and reduce disparities in communities that are typically underserved.

Target milestones in 2023 include:

- Announce pilot partners and jurisdictions
- Launch the Newborn Supply Kit pilots in a limited number of jurisdictions
- Conduct an implementation evaluation

Primary deliverables in 2023 include:

- Newborn Supply Kit prototype
- 1-2 pilots involving collaboration with non-governmental organizations and counties
- Case studies on the design and implementation of Newborn Supply Kits, including consideration of best practices for collaboration

Measures of Success

Key outcomes:

By providing families with a Kit, the project aims to:

- Reduce financial and parental stress on mothers and caregivers in the immediate postpartum period
- Increase awareness and thereby timelier enrollment of eligible families in critical support programs
- Increase trust in Federal benefits programs

Design phase project measures:

- Distribute an initial number of Kits in a limited number of pilot jurisdictions
- Demonstrate a high level of satisfaction among participants concerning timing, method, and contents of the Kit provided
- Improve experience measures (e.g., financial stress) among participants relative to comparable non-participants

Piloting Text Message Notifications for Critical Updates

Collaborating agencies:

HHS (OC, ASPA), USDA (FNS),
SSA, Treasury (BFS, IRS),
HUD, GSA

Foundation:

Discovery Research &
Life Experience Charter

Project Summary

The project will pilot a Federal notification service that will enable Federal benefits programs to use text messages (SMS) to send reminders and guidance to subscribers at crucial points throughout the benefits enrollment and renewal process.

Customer pain point:

Families need improved access to accurate and timely information while navigating benefits programs. Instead, some families encounter information and resources that are difficult to digest, mistimed, or unreceived. Application and re-enrollment timelines and requirements can be complex and mistimed; some never receive any information. As a result, some eligible families do not apply for benefits they are eligible for or lose them too soon.

Project Objectives

The notification service pilot aims to improve the customer experience for families through better communication, reduce administrative burdens, and increase eligible families' access to benefits.

Target milestones in 2023 include:

- Evaluate and develop agencies' authorities to operate the notification service
- Partner with up to three benefits programs to send the first pilot messages via the notification service
- Assess the success of the pilots
- Expand product features to help scale the impact of the notification service

Primary deliverables in 2023 include:

- Pilot the design and launch the service
- Pilot metrics to evaluate the service
- Develop a synthesis of lessons learned during pilot

Measures of Success

Key outcomes:

A successful notification service will streamline information about available resources and reduce the administrative burden on families navigating benefits programs. Outcome measures will include families' responses to the pilot notification (such as if they choose to receive messages and engage with them), whether program participation increases, and whether program churn decreases.

Design phase project measures:

- Percentage of families who opt to receive text messages
- Increase in programs utilizing SMS for the first time or a new use case
- Increase in follow-through and completion of benefit applications (and/or renewals) or other prompted actions, such as doctor's appointments, relative to those not receiving notifications
- Decrease in administrative burden compared to those without the notification service
- Improve experience measures such as trust and satisfaction with services in pilot populations compared to those not utilizing the service
- Decrease administrative costs for the government (reducing "churn" and re-applications)